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ABSTRACT

This self-study instrument is designed to support teachers' efforts to implement an early childhood program for children of 5-8 years of age that reflects the qualities of developmentally appropriate programming described in Connecticut's Guide to Program Development for Kindergarten (1988). The contents, which are presented in checklist format, focus on: (1) the learning environment; (2) the integrated curriculum; (3) roles of players in the program; (4) evaluation; and (5) partnerships among home, school, and the community. The learning environment is considered in terms of room arrangement, use of space and time, equipment, materials, supplies, scheduling, and tone of the program. The section on the integrated curriculum focuses on interactive learning play, activity centers, and themes. The section on roles of program participants focuses on teachers, children, teacher assistants, parents and other volunteers, specialists, and administrators. Evaluation is approached in terms of program continuity, observation and recording of children's behavior and growth, and the planning of the program. Content on partnerships between home, school, and community concerns family patterns and needs, and the building of an early childhood continuum. Teachers' guidelines for using the instrument are provided. It is emphasized that the rough profile of developmentally appropriate practices that the instrument provides is not to be used as part of an evaluation. (RH)

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The Teacher's Ongoing Role In Creating Developmentally Appropriate Early Childhood Program

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A Self-Study Process For Teachers of Children Ages 5-8

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The Teacher's Ongoing Role In Creating A Developmentally Appropriate Early Childhood Program

A Self-Study Process For Teachers of Children Ages 5-8

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PREFACE

This self-study instrument, based upon the Connecticut State Department of Education publication *A Guide To Program Development For Kindergarten* (1988), is designed to support your efforts as a teacher to implement an early childhood program reflecting the qualities of developmentally appropriate programming described in the guide. By becoming involved in a self-study process, you will define the present status of your program and identify objectives for gradual growth to a more developmentally appropriate program. The use of this self-study will be enhanced by referring to that document. Persons with questions should direct them to the kindergarten/primary education consultant, Connecticut Department of Education (203) 566-5409. The self-study reflects the following definition of developmental appropriateness set forth in the Kindergarten Guide:

> **Developmental Appropriateness:** The concept of developmental appropriateness has two dimensions:
>
> **Age appropriateness:** Human development research indicates that there areuniversal, predictable milestones of growth and change that occur in children during the first nine years of life. These predictable changes occur in all domains of development -- physical, emotional, social and cognitive. Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by the program provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.
>
> **Individual appropriateness:** Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style and family background. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas and people. When these experiences match the child's developing abilities, while also challenging the child's interest and understanding, learning will take place.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

Change is an ongoing developmental process of self-analysis, study and gradual personal growth. This instrument will support that process. It is designed to help you to continually analyze your own program, heightening your awareness and ability to effect change.

This instrument is based upon the principles of developmental appropriateness delineated in the Kindergarten Guide; it is applicable to all early childhood programs in elementary schools and can be used by teachers of children ages 5-8 as a *self-study process.*

Building a developmentally appropriate early childhood program is a challenge to be addressed over several years. You can enhance the process by working together with colleagues who share mutual goals and by carefully limiting yourself to specific, achievable objectives. Therefore, we suggest that you use this instrument *over time* to help you to reflect upon your own program:

1. **Preview** — Take time to carefully read the instrument before delving into completing any of its parts.

2. **Select** — After careful consideration, choose one section as your present priority and complete that section.

3. **Be Realistic** — Do not aim for a 100 percent score in any section. No teacher is expected to implement every objective in a section. Instead, plan to gradually and continually increase the developmental appropriateness of your program.

   Because some of the items in this instrument are not totally within your control (for example: kindergarten entry policies), you may want to solicit support from administrators and other teachers to develop mutual, long-term strategies to address these objectives.

4. **Plan and Take Risks** — After you complete a section, identify two to three objectives as priorities for change. Ask a colleague to help you plan strategies for these objectives. Take advantage of resources like the Connecticut State Department of Education's publication, *A Guide To Program Development for Kindergarten,* to support your planning. Then implement the changes, remembering that you will probably need many opportunities to experiment with the new strategies before they feel comfortable to you. Continue this process of targeting objectives, planning strategies and implementing them.

5. **Recheck** — Complete the same section after a few months to see where you stand. At that time, you may want to also start on one additional section to begin the process of change in that area of your program.

CONTENTS

This document consists of five sections. Each section is subdivided into components to help you to further delineate the specific strengths and needs of your program.

Section	Page
The Learning Environment	1
• Room Arrangement - Use of Space	1
• Learning Tools: Equipment, Materials and Supplies	3
• Scheduling and Use of Time	7
• Program Tone	8
The Integrated Curriculum	11
• Interactive Learning Play	11
• Activity Centers	12
• Themes	14
Roles of Players in the Program	17
• Teachers	17
• Children	18
• Teacher Assistants, Parents and Other Volunteers	21
• Specialists	22
• Administrators	23
Evaluation	26
• Providing Program Continuity	26
• Observing and Recording Children's Behavior and Growth	27
• Program Planning	28
Home-School-Community Partnerships	30
• Changing Family Patterns and Needs	30
• Parents as Partners	31
• Building an Early Childhood Continuum	32

INSTRUCTIONS

To use this instrument, select one section and respond to each (-) item by indicating the degree to which your program presently meets that criterion:

1 = not yet/rarely/to a small degree
2 = sometimes/to a moderate degree
3 = usually/frequently/to a great degree

By totaling the number of points in each section and charting them on the ***Profile of Developmentally Appropriate Practices*** (p. 34), you can create a picture of the strengths and needs of your program and set priorities for your own efforts in enhancing its developmental appropriateness.

NOTE: ***For future reference, please copy and keep the original of this form so that you can repeat the process when you want to monitor your own progress and/or continue to set new objectives for your own growth; or date each use of this instrument and use a different color pen when you repeat a section to see your growth.***

Date(s) of Use_____

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A. Room Arrangement - Use of Space

1. I organize the physical space to encourage exploration.

___ I provide an orderly, clear arrangement of equipment, materials, and supplies which are easily accessible to all children, including those with a variety of handicaps, and encourage children to make choices.

___ I provide areas in the classroom for individual, small-group, and large-group activity.

___ I make frequent small changes in the classroom and, on a regular basis, make more major adaptations of the physical environment and arrangement of space to meet individual children's changing needs and to prevent overcrowding in each area.

___ I arrange the room to foster children's interaction with people and materials.

___ I make provisions for a wide variety of behaviors, from exuberant to quiet engagement, including providing separate active and quiet activity areas.

2. I organize the physical space to encourage independence.

___ I provide ample and distinct storage with shelves, containers, and supplies labeled with symbols, pictures, and/or words to encourage children to select and put away materials and to clean up.

Use this space to keep notes on:

1. What you are doing now.
2. What you would like to be doing.
3. What new learnings and/or materials you need to achieve this objective.

NOTES

— I provide a place for each child to store personal belongings.

— I provide many places for children to display their own work.

— I organize the room from the children's perspective to allow ease of movement and access to learning tools and activity centers.

— I encourage and support children to make changes in the environment to meet their self-identified learning needs *(for example: a child's decision to store some wooden cubes in the block center instead of the math center in order to decorate structures).*

3. I organize the physical space to encourage harmonious interaction and cooperative learning.

— I ensure that children have easy access to teachers as well as learning tools.

— I provide activity area boundaries that are well defined and observable to children.

— I allow adequate space and materials to accommodate the number of children allowed in each center (usually 2-6 children).

— I plan the room with an understanding of the safety hazards typical of an early childhood classroom and of young children, arranging the centers to divert traffic from areas where it would disturb work or cause accidents *(for example: the block center and painting easel are placed in protected areas).*

NOTES

__ I remain alert to the effects of the physical environment on behavior and make changes to address children's responses and needs *(for example: adjusting the number of children allowed to work in a center to reflect changes in the way children are using a center).*

__ I provide private as well as group spaces to encourage children to create and experience cooperative and solitary activities when they feel the need.

B. Learning Tools: Equipment, Materials and Supplies

__ **1. I offer learning tools that address a wide range of developmental capabilities** *(for example: clay and sand activities as well as paper and pencil tasks to develop fine motor skills).*

__ **2. I offer many learning tools that are open-ended (rather than limited to one specific use) so children can use materials in a variety of ways.**

__ **3. I extend, enrich and simplify activities to make experiences more meaningful to individual children** *(for example: increase or reduce the amount of material to be manipulated; provide wider or narrower writing implements to help a child produce his or her desired result; furnish a variety of fiction and nonfiction books on many reading levels).*

__ **4. I carefully introduce materials and activities on a regular basis (usually some each week) to assure basic mastery, to provide variety and challenge and to meet individual children's changing needs.**

__ 5. **I provide sufficient numbers and multiples of some learning tools to encourage social interaction and peer modeling** *(for example: sufficient numbers of blocks so that at least four children can play cooperatively).*

__ 6. **The materials may include commercial, teacher-prepared, "found" objects, and materials supplied and created by the children.**

NOTES

Materials and Supplies Self-Study Checklist

Page 6 contains a list of suggested **materials and supplies**, organized by category, including those suggested in *A Guide to Program Development for Kindergarten,* (1988). No classroom is expected to include all these items at one time.

To use this list, place a checkmark next to the items which usually are available to your children on a regular basis.

Next, highlight the items which are not available in your classroom. Also consider whether you have included multiethnic, multicultural, and nonhandicapped biased learning tools, and note changes and additions you plan to make.

When you have completed this process, you will have a broad picture of the areas of strength and need related to the materials available in your room.

In order to develop a plan for the addition of materials, you may want to consider several factors:

1. **In which categories is my program particularly strong or weak?**
   Check the three strongest categories.
   Highlight the three weakest.

2. **Do I have personal interests or discomforts that have led to these strengths and weaknesses?**
   Do I avoid any particular types of activities *(for example, messy activities like clay, sand, water, fingerpaint)?*

3. **Which two categories of need am I comfortable expanding?**
   It is unrealistic to purchase equipment you are totally uncomfortable using now; leave that area for future development after you have taken time to gain more experience in that area and therefore become more comfortable with it.

4. **What are my specific priorities in these two categories of need?**
   Set up a list. Identify which items you may be able to find, create yourself, or collect from families or other community members. Then make a formal request for additional program materials based upon this thoughtful analysis of the present status of the materials and equipment in your program.

List of Suggested Materials and Supplies

Audiovisual Equipment
Listening center with head phones
Cassette recorder
Record player
Overhead projector
Transparencies
Filmstrip projector and filmstrips
Screen
Computer and software
Camera and film

Library Corner
Fiction & nonfiction books, including some with companion audiotapes
Books made by children
Chairs, rocking chair, rug
Book racks, shelves
Reading "boat" or bathtub
Magazines
Audio tapes and records

Art Supplies & Materials
Modeling clay, play dough and tools
Easels
Scissors
Tempera paint and brushes
Finger paint
Paste and glue
Crayons, water color markers
Yarn
Newsprint & manila paper
Colored construction paper
Burlap and fabric scraps
Collage materials
Colored tissue and crepe paper
Wallpaper scraps
Cardboard and oaktag

Music
Rhythm and musical instruments
Autoharp and/or piano
Records and/or tapes
Scarves & other dance props
(see A.V. equipment)

Cooking
Electric hotplate and toaster oven
Electric frying pan
Measuring cups and spoons
Bowls, utensils, pots and pans
Recipes

Language Arts/ Writing Materials
A variety of crayons, pens, markers and pencils
Different sizes and types of paper
Manipulative letters of wood, crepe, foam and plastic
Picture file and art reproductions
Sentence strips
Letter stamps
Typewriter
Alphabet cards
Index cards for word banks
Teacher-prepared blank books
Games: matching alphabet, lotto, initial consonants
Small chalkboards
Chart stand with paper
Flannel board with cutouts
Puppets and puppet stage or frame

Gross Motor Play
(Some of these may be used outdoors or in gym)
Balance beam (low)
Rocking boats
Climbing structures
Slide
Stairs
Floor mats
Wheel toys, pedal toys, wagons, ride-on vehicles
Scooter board
Parachute
Games: ring toss, bean bags
A variety of balls
Jump ropes
Plastic paddles & large bats

Math and Other Manipulatives
Pattern blocks
Unifix or multi-link cubes
ESS wooden attribute blocks
Geoboards and geobands
Color cubes
Beansticks and loose beans
Base ten blocks
Tangrams
Primer (balance) scale
Tools for measuring length, area, perimeter, volume, and time

Supplemental Manipulatives
Set boards
Lincoln Logs
Other building materials
Peg boards and pegs
Real and play money
Counters such as buttons, chips, checkers, etc.
Games and puzzles for counting, numeral recognition, etc.
Numerals
Objects for sorting, classifying and ordering
Food and/or other items to develop fractions concepts
Tabletop building toys: Legos, small block sets, building sets and accessories
Puzzles
Parquetry blocks
Lacing boards

Construction
Wooden unit blocks
Large wooden hollow blocks
Large empty boxes
Wheel toys for riding
Steering wheel
Block play props: vehicles, toy animals, people and furniture
Signs
Planks
Rug

Dramatic Play
Kitchen appliances: wooden stove, sink, refrigerator, cupboard
Table and chairs
Doll bed, blankets, pillow
Dress-up clothes/ uniforms
Occupational props: fire hoses, doctor's kit, cash register and play money
Multiethnic dolls/clothes
Broom, dust pan
Ironing board
Telephone, pots and pans, clock, food containers, dishes, silverware
Typewriter
Doll house & accessories
Full-length mirror
Real props

Woodworking
Workbench
Tools: hammer, saw, vice, clamp, hand drill, ruler, screwdrivers, pliers...
Styrofoam, logs
Wood, nails, dowels

Discovery Materials
Sand table and accessories: sifters, shovels, pails, rakes, molds, funnels, measuring cups
Rice, beans and oatmeal to vary sand play
Gardening tools/ supplies
Magnets
Color paddles and prisms
Electricity: batteries, wires, bells, flashlight bulbs
Water tub and accessories: plastic tubing, small pitchers, handpumps, spray bottles, funnels, measuring cups, eye droppers
Magnifying glasses
Simple machines: pulleys, gears, inclined plane
Collections: rocks, shells, nests, insects
Animal environments and animals
Thermometers
Globe

C. Scheduling and Use of Time

NOTES

1. **I organize the daily schedule to allow time for children to plan, implement and describe their activities.**

___ I prepare the room before children arrive so I am free to be with the children.

___ I use routines to help children move from dependence on others toward independence.

___ I meet with children daily -- individually and/or in small and large groups -- to discuss their individual plans and completed activities.

___ I develop and use a nonwritten, symbolic, and/or written sign-up system, such as a pegboard, for activity choices to support children's planning and transitions.

___ I allow time for adults and classmates to teach children the proper use and care of materials.

___ I maximize continuous time for interactive learning play and minimize the number of transitions to encourage children's sustained involvement in complex activities.

___ I help children to move calmly from one activity to another.

___ I develop and teach children to use a checklist or reporting form to record and evaluate their completed activities.

___ I have a convenient, effective, flexible method enabling me to record and change my daily plans.

___ I allow ample time for clean-up by children and organizing for departure.

2. I organize the daily schedule to reflect children's developmental needs.

__ I allocate a significant portion of the day for sustained interactive learning play activities which are primarily child initiated and allow freedom of movement as well as continuous focused attention.

__ I allocate a smaller portion of the day for activities that restrict children's movement as they participate in more structured, large-group activities.

3. I develop a well-balanced daily schedule that includes:

__ Active as well as quiet activities.

__ Individual, small-group and large-group activities.

__ Indoor and outdoor activities.

__ Independent projects as well as teacher-supervised activities.

__ Child-initiated as well as teacher-initiated activities.

D. Program Tone

__ **1. I like children and enjoy working with them.**

2. I create an atmosphere of warmth, stability, safety, dependability and enthusiasm with on-going comfortable interaction among adults and children.

__ I greet each child at the start of the day.

__ I give each child some individual attention and recognition every day.

NOTES

NOTES

__ I foster feelings of success in all areas of development for each child at his or her own level of accomplishment.

__ I strive to maintain an optimal adult/child ratio in the classroom by involving teacher assistants, parents, student teachers, and other volunteers so an adult is available to assist each child when needed (in kindergarten, a ratio of at least 2:20; in first and second grades, a ratio of at least 2:25; 15 to 18 with only one adult in the room).

__ I help each child develop self-esteem through encouragement, caring and focused attention.

3. I foster discipline by modeling appropriate behavior and maintaining developmentally appropriate expectations for children in a nonthreatening, nonjudgmental environment.

__ I emphasize positive, appropriate behaviors while allowing for mistakes.

__ I help children to respond appropriately by interceding, asking questions and/or redirecting before a problem arises.

__ I accept children's need to assert themselves, to be verbally expressive and to be inquiring.

__ I structure classroom activities to enhance cooperation rather than competition, and emphasize helpfulness, kindness and caring attitudes.

4. I foster children's autonomy and social development through modeling and encouraging effective positive communication.

__ I demonstrate self-control and coping skills myself.

__ I recognize and acknowledge children's feelings and encourage verbal mediation.

__ I encourage children to practice coping skills.

__ I use gentle humor.

__ I create a schedule that encourages and maximizes time for talking among children rather than primarily listening to adults.

__ I expose children to different points of view.

The Learning Environment:

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

NOTES

NOTES

A. Interactive Learning Play

1. I value interactive learning play as the central activity of the children's learning process.

___ A significant portion of the daily schedule is devoted to interactive learning play – active exploration and projects in learning centers.

___ Children often initiate and direct their interactive learning play *(including the choice of materials)* from the selection I provide.

2. I am a facilitator of interactive learning play.

___ I ask questions and make suggestions to help children develop thinking skills, expand themes and activities, and solve problems that arise in the course of their efforts *(for example: "Can you think of another way to sort these buttons?" , "Can you continue the road so it goes around Susan's block building?", "How many ways can you make eight?", "What information can you get from this graph?").*

___ I structure interactive learning play by providing specific materials in well-organized activity centers.

___ I seek opportunities to participate in children's interactive learning play to gain greater insights into their teaching potential *(for example: I work with the clay, experiment at the easel, build with blocks and take a role in dramatic play occasionally).*

B. Activity Centers

NOTES

1. I provide a variety of at least 4-7 centers at any one time based on the curriculum goals for learning and the individual characteristics and interests of the children in the class.

___ A construction center to encourage children to manipulate and create with blocks and block-building accessories.

___ A writing center with a variety of paper and writing implements, files of pictures identified by name, letter stamps and a typewriter.

___ A library center with a wide variety of books, story tapes and predictable books to provide opportunities to look at/read books and/or listen to stories.

___ A dramatics center, an area which changes frequently to provide settings such as a house, a supermarket, a shop or a business.

___ An art center with paint, crayons, chalk, paper, etc., which invites children to creatively express their feelings and impressions of the world around them.

___ Multisensory centers offering a variety of manipulatives to promote mathematical concepts, listening, visual and auditory discrimination, and eye-hand coordination. Sand and/or water-tables often are included.

___ An exploration center related to the biological, physical and earth sciences where children can observe, classify, predict and report information from a variety of science experiences.

___ A cooking center available to children periodically.

21

NOTES

___ A large motor development center which provides access to indoor and outdoor areas for large movement activities such as climbing, running, jumping, balancing, dramatic play and large constructions.

___ A game center housing a variety of games such as lotto, bingo and games made by teachers and older students.

2. I organize the activity centers to address children's changing developmental needs and encourage their active participation in integrated learning.

___ I offer a range of activities within each center to address a broad scope of developmental needs *(for example: the book corner has books without words, predictable books and more challenging ones).*

___ I place related centers adjacent to one another to encourage interaction between centers *(for example: dramatic play near large building blocks; writing center adjacent to listening center...).*

___ I change the environment by adding and deleting materials and activity centers to increase variety and challenge and to introduce and expand themes.

3. I organize activity centers to maximize their effectiveness within realistic limits.

___ I set up activity centers with room for 2-6 children in each center.

__ I limit the number of activity centers based upon my evaluation of space, time and personnel to prepare, maintain and supervise quality centers. *(Five effective centers are more desirable than 12 centers which lack materials, attractiveness or adequate supervision.)*

__ I incorporate both storage facilities and work/play space in each center.

__ I locate centers with practical consideration *(for example, water, sand and art activities in tiled areas, library and blocks in carpeted areas...).*

C. Themes

__ 1. **I use themes to unify learning across activity centers.**

For example: If the theme is **FOOD and NUTRITION,** with **RESTAURANTS** being a topic for exploration:

> **The dramatic play area** may become a restaurant with a few small tables and tableware, pads to write up the checks, a cash register to pay the bills, aprons or uniforms for the servers...;

> **The cooking center** may become the restaurant's kitchen, with specific recipes and related ingredients to create food for the restaurant and math manipulatives to measure, weigh, pour...;

> **The writing area** may have materials and sample menus brought by children from local restaurants so that children can create their own menus and advertisements, and write stories about restaurants and food;

NOTES

> **The book corner** may have books about restaurants, the origin and delivery process for foods and cook books;

> **The art area** may include materials and suggestions to create posters advertising the restaurant, placemats to use in the restaurant, pictures to decorate the restaurant and a large sign of the restaurant's name *(perhaps a group project);*

> **The math area** may offer opportunities for sorting types of foods, graphing classmates' food preferences and/or adding the items on a "customer's" bill.

The class might develop a plan to include:

> Creating a special meal or snack for invited restaurant guests (perhaps parents, classroom volunteers or members of the school staff);

> Inviting a cook or waitress into school to talk about the restaurant business;

> Visiting a local restaurant to learn about "behind the scenes" activities, thereby increasing the children's understanding and ability to expand the theme in greater complexity.

2. I offer changing themes which are responsive to children's interests on a regular basis.

— The themes use children's interests and experiences as a basis for learning *(for example: the arrival of spring may launch an interest in ants – their various sizes, how they move, what they eat, how much they grow – activities involving measuring, observing, exploring, researching...).*

NOTES

__ The themes are reflected in changes, additions and deletion of and/or within activity centers *(for example: the theme insects, with a focus of exploration on ants, might be reflected in adding an ant house, magnifying glasses, books about ants; and might be expanded to a study of other insects or other animals that children notice in the spring).*

__ The themes are changed regularly *(usually every 4-6 weeks)*, reflecting children's interests, sustained attention, and accomplishments.

The Integrated Curriculum:

___ Subtotal ____Date

___ Subtotal ____Date

___ Subtotal ____Date

NOTES

25

ROLES OF PLAYERS IN THE PROGRAM

NOTES

A. Teachers

1. **I actively seek to maintain a good understanding of the knowledge base regarding:**

__ Child development from birth to 8 years.

__ The learning process in early childhood.

__ Teaching techniques specific to the young child.

__ Observing and assessing young children's behavior and growth.

__ Assisting parents to enhance their understanding of their child's development and to support this development in the home and school settings.

2. **I have specific training in early childhood education and child development:**

__ I have studied or am studying child development, early childhood education or a closely related field *(i.e., child psychology, family relations)* at the college level.

__ I attend several early childhood professional development programs annually to enhance my knowledge and skills.

__ I am an active member of an organization related to the early childhood field.

NOTES

___ I seek opportunities to observe other developmentally appropriate early childhood programs.

3. I have experience working with young children. For example:

___ I have worked in a program serving children younger than kindergartners.

___ I have worked in a kindergarten program.

___ I have worked in a program serving parents and their young children.

___ I have had student teaching experience in pre-kindergarten and/or kindergarten programs.

B. Children

1. Children's own interests and needs are the core upon which I build my program.

___ The themes which I use to integrate curriculum areas are based upon the children's interests.

___ The children are active participants in the planning process (*for example: if the theme is food and nutrition, with the focus of exploration being a restaurant, children may decide its name, the type of food served, the prices, how many customers can be served at a time...*).

___ I use the children's interests to increase their curiosity and build their skills.

2. Children have opportunities to make choices and participate in independent learning.

___ Children are primarily involved in hands-on discovery, manipulation, exploration and investigation of many diverse materials in a child-centered environment.

___ Children usually are free to move around the room.

___ Children are encouraged to work individually and to work together in small groups *(for example: If a child needs help, he is encouraged to ask a friend).*

___ Children are encouraged to think for themselves and question new ideas and concepts.

3. Children are treated as individuals, with unique strengths and needs.

___ All children, including those with handicapping conditions, are accepted and valued at their own levels of ability and development and are encouraged to develop at their own pace.

___ Children have access to multilevel experiences and concrete activities of varying degrees of complexity covering a broad developmental spectrum.

___ Children are encouraged to respect, value and celebrate differences *(for example: When discrimination occurs in the classroom, I encourage discussion, understanding and resolution of the problem).*

NOTES

4. Children learn to be responsible participants in groups.

__ Children help to develop and implement positive class rules which encourage self-discipline.

__ Children are encouraged to work cooperatively as team members in many small group experiences.

__ Children usually are engaged in spontaneous talking with adults and classmates, discussing experiences and activities.

__ Children are encouraged to be empathetic and responsive to others' feelings and needs.

5. Children learn to take responsibility for themselves and the environment.

__ Children are encouraged to become self-reliant, caring for themselves and their personal belongings.

__ Children are encouraged to be responsible for the care and storage of equipment, materials and supplies.

__ Children are encouraged to take primary responsibility for clean up *(sponging tables, washing paint brushes, sweeping up sand...).*

NOTES

C. Teacher Assistants, Parents and Other Volunteers

1. Teacher assistants are prepared to implement their responsibilities.

__ They have received training in early childhood education *(preferably prior to being hired)* and/or they receive ongoing professional development for which I assume significant responsibility.

__ Teacher assistants and I communicate regularly through frequent planning/ evaluation meetings, as well as suggestions posted in learning centers, message boards and other devices *(for example: when patterning is a major learning activity, a sign in the manipulative area might suggest questions to be asked of children - "Can you copy this pattern? Can you extend this pattern? Can you find this pattern in the room? Can you invent another pattern? Can you invent a pattern that uses more shapes? More colors?").*

2. Teacher assistants support and reinforce children's learning with my direction.

__ They read to a child or group of children.

__ They listen to and record children's dictated stories and/or encourage and assist children to write their own stories using invented and teacher-taught spelling.

__ They help children with learning activities by asking leading questions, making suggestions...

__ They guide children in learning and playing games.

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__ They listen to children tell stories and/or read books.

__ They guide children in learning and playing games.

__ They help to prepare materials and keep records.

__ They help children to choose, record and evaluate their activities.

__ 3. **I encourage, train and involve parents and other volunteers in the program in roles similar to those of the teacher assistant and coordinate their involvement in the program.**

D. Specialists

(including art, music and physical education teachers; school nurse; speech and hearing or language development specialist; social worker; psychological counselor; guidance counselor and special education teacher)

1. **I encourage specialists to support and enhance the program directly.**

__ I encourage them to be involved in specific classroom activities with individual children as well as small and large groups.

__ I work with them to coordinate their classroom activities with the regular classroom teacher to avoid content isolation.

__ I seek opportunities to observe them model teaching in their area of expertise.

__ I encourage them to lead workshops and discussions at parent meetings.

__ I regularly ask them for feedback based upon their work with the children.

2. I encourage specialists to support and enhance the program indirectly.

___ I regularly ask them for advice on ways of handling children with special needs, based upon their observing children in the classroom.

___ I ask them to provide ideas for and/or supply materials and activities, and to help me to select new instructional materials, equipment and supplies.

___ I seek opportunities for them to keep me informed of new research and new professional resources in the field *(including professional conferences, journals, pamphlets and books).*

E. Administrators

1. Administrators have a good understanding of the principles and components of high-quality early childhood programs:

___ They have some training in child development and early childhood education.

___ I encourage them to attend early childhood professional development programs by informing them of opportunities and asking them to attend presentations.

___ I regularly seek their support for me, teacher assistants, and other early childhood colleagues to participate in early childhood professional development opportunities (attendance at conferences and workshops; discussions in faculty meetings, etc.).

NOTES

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__ I take advantage of opportunities they create for communication and dialogue among teachers about developmentally appropriate programming, and about individual children's needs.

__ 2. **I work with administrators and support them to provide an effective, consistent, ongoing communication system that creates a clear understanding and cooperative "ownership" of developmentally appropriate practices with parents, the community and all staff members.**

3. **Administrators place a high priority on developmentally appropriate class size:**

__ I work with them to limit class size to 20 or fewer children in kindergarten, 25 or fewer in first and second grades with two adults in the classroom (15-18 with only one adult in the room).

__ I actively seek their support of my efforts to effectively reduce class size with strategies like scheduling specialists in conjunction with other early childhood classes.

4. **Administrators place a high priority on developmentally appropriate adult:child ratios.**

__ When possible, they maintain a ratio of at least two adults for every 20 children in kindergarten and for every 25 children in first and second grades, through the provisions of teacher assistants.

__ I actively seek their support of my efforts to use specialists, parents, community members and older students to maintain or reduce this ratio of 2:20 in kindergarten, and 2:25 in first and second grades.

5. I work with administrators to encourage the use of developmentally appropriate principles and strategies related to kindergarten entry and class placement/grouping:

__ Age is the only criterion used for kindergarten entry; therefore different levels of ability and development are expected and valued.

__ Any tests used at kindergarten entrance and other intervals are valid, reliable and helpful in initial program planning and information sharing with parents.

__ Retention is rejected as a viable option for young children.

__ All children are welcomed --as they are-- into heterogeneous classroom settings.

__ I actively support these entry and placement principles and strategies.

__ **6. I work with administrators to support developmentally appropriate classrooms by striving to provide funds for needed staff, equipment, materials and supplies.**

Roles of Players in the Program:

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

NOTES

EVALUATION

A. Providing Program Continuity

1. I prepare children for the transition into and from my program.

__ I create several opportunities for children and families to visit my program prior to their formal entry and/or foster informal interaction between my class and the preceding and following groups.

__ I actively encourage children and families to participate in these opportunities.

2. I seek to meet the needs of all children who participate in my program.

__ I focus on the individual developmental needs of children and accept age as the only entry criteria.

__ I accept, value and plan for a broad range of developmental levels and welcome all children.

__ I use the results of developmental screening to alert me to the need for further diagnostic assessment, not to place children in programs or to discourage entry into my program.

__ I use test scores (if readiness or developmental screening tests must be used) to make initial instructional decisions about each child, not to create barriers to school entry or to attempt to group children into separate, homogeneous classrooms.

__ I evaluate the results of formal screenings and tests in light of each child's daily classroom behavior.

NOTES

35

B. Observing and Recording Children's Behavior and Growth

NOTES

__ 1. **I take time to observe children's behavior and growth on a daily basis to identify individual needs and to ensure that children are involved in a variety of areas of the program.**

__ 2. **I record my observations on a daily basis.**

__ 3. **I use a variety of methods to study and record each child's development and current level of understanding. For example:**

> I spend at least 10 minutes at the end of each day to jot down observations.

> I select a different group of children to focus on at regular/weekly intervals for individual note keeping.

> I use checklists to record frequently observed physical, social-emotional and intellectual developments and/or use self-recording forms completed by children.

> I save dated samples of work of each child.

> I keep a small note pad or clipboard handy at all times for recording observations and anecdotes.

> I use a camera to record non-permanent products such as block construction and organization of dramatic play.

> I use audio and video recording equipment to augment observations.

4. I regularly use my observations and other records to identify and respond to children's changing needs.

___ I interpret observations within the context of the whole child.

___ I look for patterns of behavior exhibited at different times and in different situations.

___ To meet the diverse needs of each child, I focus on both children's areas of strength and weakness.

___ I observe children's behavior in spontaneous, self-initiated activities as well as in teacher-initiated activities and routines.

C. Program Planning

1. I use my observations to build developmentally appropriate expectations for each child.

___ I set individual, realistic goals so that each child is challenged and supported.

___ I communicate in a positive, nonthreatening and encouraging manner to promote children's feelings of success and to develop children's capacity to learn from mistakes.

___ I work to identify and respond to children's special needs and different learning styles.

2. I use my observations to build short- and long-range plans for the group.

___ I assess regularly the suitability of classroom organization, room arrangement, management, routine and program content for the children's changing development.

NOTES

__ I consider all aspects of development – physical, social-emotional, cognitive and creative – in setting goals and formulating plans.

__ I develop long-range plans and organize concepts that will tie the program components together through the year to form an integrated curriculum.

__ I plan both content and implementation of activities.

3. My planning is very flexible.

__ I modify plans on the basis of children's spontaneous interests, individual needs and responses.

__ I plan projects and activities to address children's needs by flexibly using locally developed curriculum guides and checklists, published teachers' guides, scope and sequence materials, and other appropriate resources.

___ Subtotal: Evaluation

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

NOTES

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A. Changing Family Patterns and Needs

1. **I am sensitive to and demonstrate acceptance of each child's individual family pattern, cultural heritage or special needs.**

__ I create a broad positive definition about "family," including patterns like single parenting and blended families.

__ I strive to be knowledgeable about and sensitive to each child's family pattern and special stresses *(for example, illness or death of family member, new sibling, recent divorce...).*

__ I value cultural diversity and seek to establish and maintain a nonsexist, multicultural classroom environment. *(for example, my classroom contains pictures of members of many cultural groups of both sexes in varied occupations and professions).*

__ I strive to be knowledgeable about and sensitive to each child's special needs, including handicapping conditions.

2. **I am responsive to the needs generated by cultural diversity and changing family patterns.**

__ I seek effective, positive ways to be a resource for information and referral for families *(for example: child care services, economic and health supports...).*

__ I try to accommodate the needs of the children's families *(schedule only a few events each year, communicate with families by telephone when possible...).*

NOTES

__ I respond to the needs of working families and avoid scheduling patterns which disrupt families and children *(for example, I avoid scheduling parent conferences and/or meetings during the school day without helping to assure that child care options are available).*

B. Parents as Partners

1. I involve parents in the transition processes *(from pre-kindergarten experiences to kindergarten, from kindergarten into first grade...).*

__ I seek parental input about their children's development and their expectations.

__ I include parent participation in the kindergarten entry process and/or in the transition into my class.

__ I create opportunities for families to learn about and visit my program and the program the child will participate in the following year in ways that are responsive to their needs and availability.

2. I strive to maintain open and clear lines of communication with families on a frequent and regular basis.

__ I summarize children's individual development and needs in clear, positive, jargon-free language.

__ I use a variety of means for communication *(conferences, home visits, meetings, monthly newsletters, telephone calls, classroom visits by parents...).*

__ I respect parents for the difficult job they have, listen to their viewpoints and support them in their roles as parents.

3. **I actively seek to involve parents in a meaningful partnership that supports the child's educational experience.**

__ I establish a trusting relationship with families, making them feel welcome to communicate frequently with program staff.

__ I provide frequent, specific opportunities for parents to be involved with their child's education at home and encourage and support their efforts.

__ I encourage families to participate in the program in a variety of roles responsive to their own needs and availability *(for example: preparing materials for the classroom, contacting other parents by telephone...).*

C. Building an Early Childhood Continuum

1. **I work with other school staff to build developmental continuity within my school.**

__ I seek formal and informal opportunities to develop ongoing communication and cooperative efforts with all school staff.

__ I support and participate in school early childhood meetings addressing developmental continuity.

__ I communicate with school staff about the goals of our programs and encourage and participate in mutual observations of our classrooms in action.

__ I support efforts to build more realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations for children.

__ I share my understanding and knowledge of the children in my class with their next teachers.

2. **I work with other early childhood professionals and administrators to build developmental continuity among all early childhood settings: home, pre-kindergarten and elementary school programs .**

__ I seek formal and informal opportunities to develop ongoing communication and cooperative efforts with all members of the community's early childhood programs.

__ I support and participate in community early childhood meetings addressing developmental continuity.

__ I communicate with community early childhood programs about the goals of my program and encourage them to observe my classroom in action *(for example: Head Start, school-aged child care...)*.

__ I take time to visit other early childhood programs in the community to see them in action.

__ I support efforts to build more realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations for children in all community early childhood programs.

___ Subtotal: Home-School-Community Partnerships

___Subtotal ____ Date

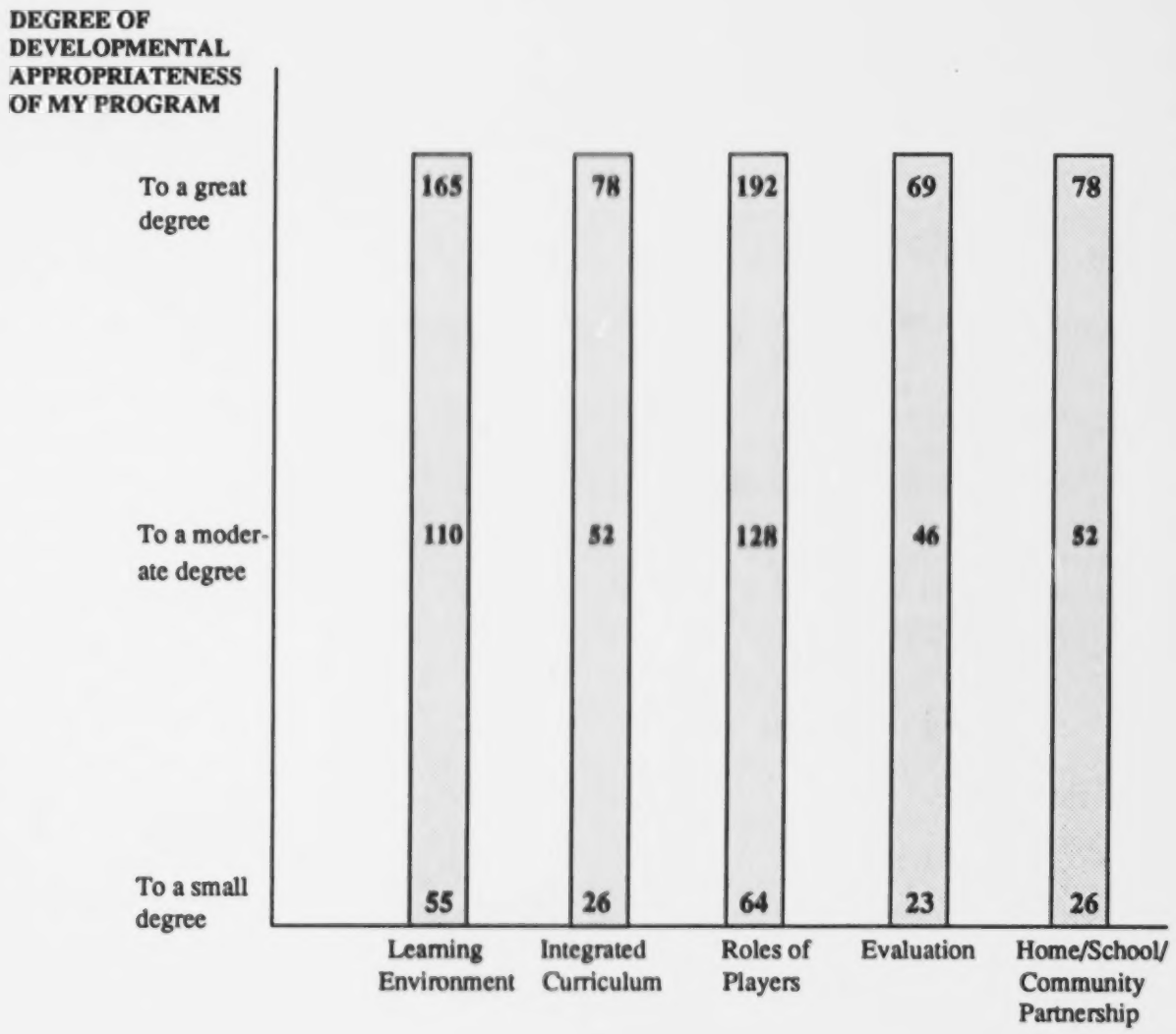
___Subtotal ____ Date

___Subtotal ____ Date

42

PROFILE OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

By recording the subtotal within each component, you can get a "rough" profile of the strengths and needs of your program.



As part of this formative document, the profile is provided as a visual representation of your program. Because all items in the instrument are not equal, this is only a rough profile. Please use it as a diagnositc tool in helping you to assess your program's strengths and needs, as well as your own growth. *This is not to be used as part of an evaluation process.*

Connecticut State Department of Education

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